



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Media Release

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Bishop Timothy Norton SVD appointed to Diocese of Broome

Pope Francis has this evening appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane, the Most Reverend Timothy Norton SVD, to be the third Bishop of Broome.

Bishop Norton was born in Sydney in 1958 and initially trained as a physiotherapist, working in inner-city Darlinghurst with young people who were experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues.

He entered the Society of the Divine Word in 1984 and took his first vows in 1986.

In 1991 he was ordained priest, ministering in parishes in Mexico until 1996.

Having undertaken post-graduate study in spiritual direction in Melbourne in 1997, he served as the Society's prefect for theology students and novice and postulant director, based in Melbourne and Sydney, from 1998 to 2004.

His nine years as leader of the Society's Australian province (which takes in New Zealand and Thailand) was followed by ministry in Italy from 2014 to 2021.

And in February 2022 he was ordained Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference President and Archbishop of Perth, Timothy Costelloe SDB, said Bishop Norton would bring "energy, enthusiasm and vision" to the Diocese of Broome.

"As a member of the Society of the Divine Word, Bishop Norton has a deep appreciation of the importance of cultural traditions in the living of the Christian faith," Archbishop Costelloe said.

"Having lived and worked in rural and remote areas of Australia, as well as overseas, he brings with him a love for the Indigenous people of our nation, a heart for the poor and marginalised, and a 'down-to-earth' approach to the needs and realities of our time.

"He will be a blessing not only to the Catholic community in the vast Diocese of Broome, but to all who live in the north-west."

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Apostolic Administrator of the Broome Diocese, Bishop Michael Morrissey, noted Bishop Norton currently served as a member of the Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

“In the Diocese of Broome, where 61 percent of Catholics identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, his commitment to strengthening relationships with Aboriginal community members will be greatly valued,” Bishop Morrissey said.

Bishop Morrissey’s full statement will be available on the Diocese of Broome website.

BACKGROUND ON THE BROOME DIOCESE

- The Diocese of Broome is in the Kimberley region in the far north of the state of Western Australia.
- It spans 773,000 square kilometres (an area bigger than France) and has a population of about 36,000 people spread across remote towns and isolated Indigenous communities.
- It was established as an Apostolic Vicariate in 1887 and became a Diocese in 1966.
- Half of the population of the Kimberley region are Indigenous
- Indigenous people make up the majority (61 per cent) of Catholics connected with the Kimberley Church.